



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbnr>

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Two Prescribed Burns in Sierra Madre Planned by U.S. Forest Service

(SARATOGA, Wyo.) April 21, 2014 – Medicine Bow National Forest fire crews are hoping to conduct two prescribed burns this spring, beginning as early as this week. Both prescribed burns are located west of Encampment, Wyo. on the Brush Creek-Hayden Ranger District's Sierra Madre Range.

Approximately 200 acres are targeted for burning over one to two days this spring in the Divide Peak Prescribed Burn Project. Located near the northwest corner of the Sierra Madre, this project area encompasses about 1,600 acres and is expected to require multiple years to complete burning.

The 4,500 acre Sandstone Prescribed Burn Project, which occurs on the west end of the Sierra Madre in Big Sandstone Canyon, is also a multi-year effort that began last spring with the successful burning of approximately 200 acres. This year's targeted 200 acres is anticipated to take one day to implement.

Suitable weather and fuel moisture conditions will determine the exact date of these burns. Burning will not take place unless daily ventilation category (smoke dispersal) forecasts are "good" to "excellent" and other weather-related conditions are favorable. As is often the case, fire managers will be faced with a small window of time between snowmelt and vegetation green-up during which to implement the spring burn.

Both prescribed burns are expected to burn in a mosaic pattern, desired to diversify plant species, age and composition.

Burn units are composed of mountain shrubs, grass and some aspen. To reduce adverse fire activity, a key burn plan requirement is that the units be mostly surrounded by snow and/or non-burnable breaks in the topography. U.S. Forest Service fire crews will monitor the burn area until all fires are completely out.

Prescribed burns are used by the Forest Service to benefit wildlife and vegetation. A versatile management tool, the burns can reinvigorate rangeland, mimic historically natural fire disturbances, reduce hazardous fuels buildup, and improve habitat for a variety of wildlife.

Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District visitors are encouraged to call the District Office at (307) 326-2517 with questions or visit the District Office at 2171 Hwy 130, in Saratoga between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Information may also be found on this website, <http://fs.usda.gov/mbnr>, or you can follow the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest and Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter, [@MBRNFsTBNG](#).

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